

REFERENCES

- CHOUDHURY, A. U. (1997): Red panda *Ailurus fulgens* F. Cuvier in the northeast with an important record from Garo Hills. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 94(1): 145-147.
- CORBET, G.B. & J.E. HILL (1992): The mammals of the Indomalayan Region: a systematic review. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- MACDONALD, D. (ED.) (1984): The Encyclopaedia of Mammals. Vols. 1&2, George Allen & Unwin, London & Sydney.
- PRATER, S.H. (1980): The Book of Indian Animals. Repr. with corrections, Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai.

2. HUNTING ATTEMPT BY NILGIRI MARTEN *MARTES GWATKINSI* HORSFIELD, FAMILY MUSTELIDAE, IN PERIYAR TIGER RESERVE, KERALA

On December 16, 2000, a group of 11 persons led by the first author were participating in population estimation of tiger and prey base in the Periyar Tiger Reserve. At about 1000 hrs, we chanced upon a group of four Nilgiri martens *Martes gwatkinsi*, trying to hunt a mouse deer (*Tragulus meminna*), which we watched for about 10 minutes. The wounded mouse deer was moving about in a small pool of water with a steep bank on one side, and sandy dunes on the other sides. The martens had surrounded the pool, but did not venture into it. One marten tried to reach the mouse deer by moving down a root protruding into the pool from the bank.

On sensing our presence, the martens fled into the forest. The second author followed one of them to about 1.5 m, and photographed it on

a tree. Soon, however, the animal moved down to 3 m from him, jumped into the undergrowth and disappeared. Meanwhile, one of us took pictures of the mouse deer in the pool. This happened in a rainforest dominated by *Cullenia exarillata*, by a trek path connecting Vellimala and Thamara, at an elevation of about 1,500 m.

The Nilgiri marten is listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, and is endemic to the higher elevations of the Western Ghats. It has been rarely sighted, and even less is known about its feeding habits.

February 20, 2001

JOJI JOHN

MADHUKUMAR

*Periyar Tiger Reserve,
Thekkady, Kerala 685 536, India.*

3. POSSIBLE OCCURRENCE OF TIBET RED DEER *CERVUS ELAPHUS WALLICHI* IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

(With a text-figure)

The Tibet red deer *Cervus elaphus wallichi* Cuvier 1823, also called the *shou* or Sikkim stag is a very rare and little known subspecies of the red deer *C. elaphus*. Once it was even thought to be extinct (Thornback 1978). At present, it is known only from southern Tibet (Schaller *et al.* 1996), though its original distribution included Bhutan also (Anon. 1976). During a visit to Bhutan in January 2001, I got reports of its possible occurrence in parts of Thrumshingla

National Park, but no evidence was available.

During field survey for wildlife in western Arunachal Pradesh, I could not get direct evidence of the presence of the species, although older people reported a large deer with branched antlers (more branches than those of the sambar *Cervus unicolor*), which used to occur in the north. They called it *shou*. The sambar was not uncommon on the south-facing slopes of the Himalaya, especially in the deep valleys, mainly